

\$275K SETTLEMENT

Judge approves payout for boy injured at Harborview school. A4.

HARRIS STREET

Progress remains slow in addressing disturbances. A3.

FROM THE BUSH TO THE BEACH

Meet this Alaskan artist. Inside.



Fish fight grows more pricey

Mines dump \$1.2 million more into 'vote no' campaign; total spending tops \$7.2 million

By JAMES BROOKS
JUNEAU EMPIRE

This year's fish fight is already half as expensive as the 2014 ballot battle over Alaska's oil and gas tax system.

According to new filings from the Alaska Public Offices commission, mining firms Teck Alaska and Donlin Gold have donated an additional \$1.2 million to a group whose mission is to campaign against Ballot Measure 1 in this fall's election.

According to the report filed July 6 by "Stand for Alaska — Vote No on One," contributors have now provided \$6.3 million to the opposition's cause.

A July 10 report filed by "Yes for Salmon," which is backing Ballot Measure 1, shows just over \$989,000 in contributions.

"Stand for Salmon," which is also backing the measure, reported about \$105,000 in contributions in a report filed July 7.

The Washington, D.C.-based New Venture Fund and Trout Unlimited also have reported a few thousand dollars in expenses supporting the ballot measure.

In 2014, Alaskans spent more than \$14 million backing and opposing a ballot measure that aimed to repeal an oil tax cut known as Senate Bill 21. More than \$13 million of that tally was spent on "vote no" efforts backing the tax cut, and less than \$1 million was spent by "vote yes" proponents.

Teck Alaska is the operator of the Red Dog zinc and lead mine in the Northwest Arctic Borough. Donlin is developing a gold mine on a tributary of the Kuskokwim River in southwest Alaska. If approved, the mine would be one of the largest open-pit gold mines in the world.

According to APOC records, Stand for Alaska is spending heavily on radio and TV advertising. The organization reported nearly \$800,000 in ad buys on June 26; it is spending another \$75,000 on internet ads.

Initiative backers ap-

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ALEX MCCARTHY | JUNEAU EMPIRE

A soft-sided carport stands in the 9100 block of Cohen Drive on Wednesday. Law enforcement officials say pet carcasses were kept in this carport, and bears had begun to eat the carcasses.

Pet cremator cited for leaving dead animals out, attracting bears

Bridge Pet Services owner says he fell behind in his work

By ALEX MCCARTHY
JUNEAU EMPIRE

After falling behind in his work, Juneau's lone pet cremator stored the deceased animals in a soft-sided carport in front of his home, Alaska Depart-

ment of Fish & Game Regional Supervisor Ryan Scott said Wednesday. As a result, bears were attracted to the area to eat the dead animals, Scott said.

Mike Dziuba, who owns Bridge Pet Services, said in a brief interview Wednesday that he had fallen behind on his work.

"My apologies to the community," Dziuba said. "I am currently at capacity for provid-

ing cremation services. I can offer assistance with shipping if owners are interested and need advice. It will be a few weeks until I can re-accept pets, but it might be longer than that."

Dziuba was cited for a bear attraction nuisance, Juneau Police Department Public Safety Manager Erann Kalwara said. The Gastineau Humane Society and JPD were still working together on a joint statement

about the situation as of Wednesday evening.

The problem came to light in the early hours of Tuesday morning, Scott said. His office got a report early Tuesday from Alaska Wildlife Troopers that there was a bear attractant in the Cohen Drive area near Tee Harbor. The attractant, the troopers reported to Scott's

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ELAINE THOMPSON | THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yolany Padilla, an asylum seeker separated from her 6-year-old son as part of the Trump Administration's "zero tolerance" policy, looks on at a news conference Wednesday in Seattle. Padilla was released on bond from the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma on July 6. Her son is in federal custody in New York.

Detained mothers beginning to be released in Washington

By GENE JOHNSON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEATTLE — Some asylum-seeking parents who have been detained in Washington state after being separated from their children have started to be released from custody, advocates said Wednesday, but it remains unclear when they

might see their sons or daughters again.

The Northwest Immigrant Rights Project in Seattle said it knows of 55 people detained at the U.S.-Mexico border before being separated from their children and transferred to Washington under President Donald Trump's zero-tolerance policy.

An immigration judge released one, Yolany Padilla, a 24-year-old from Honduras, on \$8,000 bond from the Northwest Detention Center, a private immigration jail in Tacoma, on Friday — seven weeks after she crossed the border illegally in Hidalgo, Texas.

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STATE

Work on gas pipeline continues

No major developments as state-owned corporation provides update to Legislature

By JAMES BROOKS
JUNEAU EMPIRE

The multibillion-dollar trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline project is still advancing, state lawmakers were told in a Wednesday morning hearing.

At a regular quarterly update in Anchorage, executives from the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation told legislators they are working on contracts with potential gas customers in Asia.

The corporation has 15 "letters of interest" from customers, and it is trying to turn those into "definitive agreements," AGDC President Keith Meyer told reporters before Wednesday's hearing. Meyer was meeting with potential investors

and did not participate in the hearing.

Sen. Cathy Giessel, R-Anchorage, and Rep. Geran Tarr, D-Anchorage, chaired Wednesday's meeting, and each said they didn't hear anything particularly groundbreaking from Wednesday's presentation, which included information from AGDC as well as the Alaska Department of Revenue and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

According to the latest figures presented at Wednesday's meeting, the AKLNG (Alaska Liquefied Natural Gas) project would spend \$44 billion to construct a 907-mile pipeline bracketed by a pair of

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NEWS

Russia not hacking elections yet, DHS says

Still, lawmaker contends ‘we need to be prepared’

Erin Kelly
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – There is no evidence so far that Russian hackers are mounting the kind of “robust” attacks on state election systems this year that they did in 2016, a top homeland security official told a House panel Wednesday.

“The 2018 midterms remain a potential target for Russian actors,” said Christopher Krebs, under secretary of the national protection and programs directorate at the Department of Homeland Security.

“But the intelligence community has yet to see any evidence of a robust campaign aimed at tampering with our election infrastructure along the lines of 2016 or influencing the makeup of the House or Senate races,” Krebs told the House Homeland Security Committee at a hearing on election security.

In 2016, Russian hackers tried to breach election systems in at least 21 states, according to homeland security officials. Although no actual votes were changed, hackers broke into Illinois’ voter registration database and stole some information.

Krebs said it’s likely that the hackers actually scanned the election systems of all 50 states for vulnerabilities.

Russia also mounted a major effort in 2016 to influence the U.S. election through the use of social media on Facebook, Twitter and Google. Russian troll farms created fake social media accounts and websites to try to sow dissent among Americans on divisive issues such as race, gay rights, gun control and religion.

Krebs told lawmakers that the Russians are at it again this year.

The intelligence community sees the Russians using social media “to influence or inflame positions on opposite ends of controversial issues,” Krebs said. “These efforts seem to be more fo-



The Department of Homeland Security has completed risk and vulnerability assessments on election systems in 17 states in an attempt to help local officials find and correct problems. SHELPLY LUM/AP



President Donald Trump is preparing to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin next week. JACQUELYN MARTIN/AP

cused on dividing rather than on targeting specific politicians or political candidates. Nonetheless, we remain vigilant and any attempt to undermine our democracy will be met with consequences.”

State election and homeland security officials will meet in Philadelphia this week to keep cooperating on how to fix the cyber security of state elections sys-

tems, Krebs said. State election systems include vote tabulation systems as well as voter registration databases.

So far, the Department of Homeland Security has completed risk and vulnerability assessments on election systems in 17 states to help local officials find and correct problems, Krebs said.

The Russians will target the congressional midterm elections this November, said Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, the committee chairman. “We need to be prepared,” he said.

President Donald Trump’s behavior, most recently Wednesday in Brussels, is making Krebs’ job harder, said Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, the committee’s top Democrat. Trump accused Germany of being “totally controlled by Russia” and of not meeting its NATO obligations.

“Germany, as far I’m concerned, is captive to Russia,” Trump said.

The president is preparing to meet next week with Russian President Vladimir Putin to try to improve U.S.-Rus-

sian relations.

“Instead of working with our European allies to confront Russia — a shared adversary whose attempts to undermine Western democratic institutions are growing more and more bold — (Trump) is trolling them to curry favor with Russian President Vladimir Putin.” Thompson said.

Thompson also expressed doubts about whether Trump will confront Putin about Russia’s 2016 election meddling, which Putin has repeatedly denied.

“President Trump has said he will address Russia’s 2016 election meddling in a meeting with Putin, but he has never demonstrated a credible ability to confront Putin with our Intelligence Community’s findings,” Thompson said.

Congress passed legislation this year giving states a total of \$380 million in grants to boost the security of their election systems. Lawmakers also approved \$26 million for DHS to strengthen election cyber security.

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massive industrial plants. At the southern end, in the Kenai Peninsula community of Nikiski, would be a facility designed to export the gas onto tankers bound for ports in Asia.

The plan, which is being pushed by Gov. Bill Walker as a successor to efforts started by former governors Sarah Palin and Sean Parnell, is the latest iteration of ideas that have been on the table since the trans-Alaska Pipeline System began shipping crude oil 41 years ago.

The AGDC, a state-

owned corporation, is in charge of developing the project. That includes negotiating contracts with gas providers (North Slope oil companies) and gas buyers (utilities in Asia). With those deals in hand, the state would be able to find investors to fund construction of the project. When the pipeline begins operation, the plan calls for those investors to be paid off over a period of 20-30 years, leaving the state with full ownership.

While a gas pipeline has been a political issue since the 1970s, Department of Revenue deputy commissioner Mike Barnhill told lawmakers, “We may be at that point where we seriously consider how we do this.”

AGDC representatives

provided an update on the multi-year federal permitting process and said they have found an American supplier for the steel pipe that may be used in the project. That matters because recent tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump on imported steel pipe had threatened to increase the cost of the pipeline.

“That’s a very good positive,” AGDC vice president Frank Richards said of the American supplier, “because previously we didn’t see that there was 42-inch (pipe) being rolled in the United States.”

Lawmakers are keeping a close eye on the project because the state is likely to shoulder a one-quarter share of construction costs. At \$44

billion, that would mean an \$11 billion payment.

The Alaska Permanent Fund is not seriously considering an investment at present, lawmakers were told.

Sens. Click Bishop, R-Fairbanks, and Bert Stedman, R-Sitka, each said that it will be absolutely critical for the state to be accurate with its cost estimates. Construction of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline system was three times as expensive as forecast, and a state-owned gas pipeline cannot do that.

“I don’t mind betting the cow,” Stedman said. “There’s no way I’m betting the farm.”

• Contact reporter James Brooks at jbrooks@juneauempire.com or 523-2258.

FISH:

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pear to be working more at the individual level, with their largest listed expenses being printed material and staff time organizing volunteers and contacting voters.

Ballot Measure 1 seeks to strengthen environmental protections for salmon-bearing streams and rivers across the state. It has been opposed by a broad coalition of construction, mining and petroleum corporations who argue that it would impair projects across the state. Local govern-

ments have also raised concerns about how road construction and other building efforts would be affected.

The Alaska Supreme Court is also considering the measure’s constitutionality. Alaska’s constitution prohibits ballot measures that make appropriations — of resources such as land and water, as well as money — and the State of Alaska is arguing that the measure is so broad that it effectively allocates state waters for fish, at the expense of other uses.

A ruling on the matter is expected before August.

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PETS:

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office, was likely domestic animal carcasses.

Scott said he and others from ADF&G arrived at around 9 a.m. Tuesday to find the items were indeed “parts of domestic pets,” he said. Scott said he spoke with one neighbor and with Dziuba, and talked about how to properly store the carcasses to keep them away from bears.

“Everything’s been cleaned up at this point,” Scott said. “We’ve confirmed that. We will be monitoring the area as far as bear activity and bear numbers and bear behavior and things like that.”

Dziuba said he’s moved the carcasses to a bear-resistant location.

At Dziuba’s address on Cohen Drive on Wednesday afternoon, the carport stood at the top of his driveway. The carport was empty, but the smell of decomposition still lingered in the air. A neighbor came by and

said she was going to get cleaning supplies to help clean the carport, as she didn’t want bears coming back to the scene.

This isn’t the first time Dziuba has fallen behind in providing cremations. This March, pet owners in Juneau began to notice it was taking a long time for their animals’ remains to come back to them and eventually found that Dziuba was storing the animals in the back of his car.

Dziuba told the Empire at the time that he was working with clients to get back on sched-

ule. In the interview Wednesday, Dziuba said he hasn’t been able to catch up on his backlog of pets. He said someone reached out to help him out, so he has been working with that person to share the work.

Still, he said it will be a while before he gets caught up and people can look for updates on Bridge Pet Service’s Facebook page. He made a post at around 4 p.m. Wednesday, saying he was not going to be accepting pets for a few weeks at least.

“After I complete the

cremations for what I have,” he wrote in the post, “a decision will have to be made on how this business will have to change going forward.”

The City and Borough of Juneau has an ordinance, numbered 08.45.020, titled “Dead animals,” that says people need to “immediately” dispose of any dead animal. In a recent interview, City Manager Rorie Watt said there isn’t an exact definition of “immediately,” but that the disposal should obviously happen sooner rather than later.

Animals, according to the ordinance, must be buried, disposed at the landfill or cremated. If a person finds an animal on their property and the animal has a tag or other form of identification, the ordinance reads, the property owner can take time to contact the owner or animal control. Animal control, which can be reached at 789-1795, will then try to locate the owner.

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RELEASE:

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Another was released Monday and three more on Wednesday, the organization said.

Padilla’s attorneys told a news conference Wednesday her 6-year-

old son remains in federal custody in New York, and it’s unclear when the government will release him to her. They declined to provide further details about Padilla’s background, citing the sensitivity of her asylum case.

“Now that I’m free, I don’t understand why they’re not returning him, or why I can’t go pick him up,” Padilla said. “He’s

starting to get restless, because he expects me to go to get him, but that hasn’t happened and we don’t know when it will. The last time we spoke, the call ended in tears.”

Padilla is a named plaintiff in a class-action lawsuit the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project has filed challenging the family separations. U.S. Immigration and Cus-

toms Enforcement has declined to comment on her case.

One of her attorneys, Leta Sanchez, said authorities have been demanding that Padilla go through several hoops before she and the boy are reunited. Those include a background check and resubmitting fingerprints, even though immigration officials have repeatedly

taken her fingerprints since her detention.

The administration has been scrambling to reunify the families this week to meet the first of two deadlines set by a federal judge in San Diego who ordered thousands of children be given back to their parents. Scores of children separated from their families at the border were sent to government-con-

tracted shelters or foster care hundreds of miles away from where their parents were detained.

Padilla’s son, Jelsin, has been in foster care in New York — where exactly is unclear, but Sanchez said she was told the home is about a 20-minute drive from the Bronx, where he has been attending school at the Cayuga Center for troubled youth.